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**Third Research Team Meeting: Upper West Region, Ghana**

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Produced by: Hamid Seidu, Fuseini Abdulai and Ismail Mahama

Venue: MoFA Conference Hall, Wa.

Date: 18th December, 2015

**BACKGROUNG**

Africa RISING project in Ghana is a USAID funded project led by International Institute of Tropical Agriculture(IITA).It is a research project into sustainable Intensification and integration of natural resources to improve productivity, nutrition, income security and reduce hunger and poverty in small holder families especially children and women. The project is being implemented in the three regions of the north (Northern, Upper East and Upper West).In Upper West region the project is implemented in two districts, Nadowli Kaleo and Wa West districts. In Nadowli-kaleo district the project is implemented in five communities (Gyilli, Nator-Duori, Papu,Goli and Goriyiri) and Wa West also has five communities(Siiriyiri, Guo, Zanko, Nyagli and Pase).

**REGIONAL RESEARCH MEETINGS**

The regional research team meetings is a platform created for interaction among work research theme leaders, FBOs and other partners to promote integrated approach for implementing project activities, these meetings are quarterly and this happens to be the last quarter of the year thus the last research team meeting for the year 2015.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REGIONAL RESEARCH MEETING.**

The meeting was held on 18th December, 2015 at the regional MoFA conference hall in Wa. Participants are; research theme representatives, FBO members from all the intervention communities, District Directors of Agriculture, Research for Development (R4D) platform members, district nutrition officers, Women in agricultural development (WIAD) officers.

**Meeting objectives and expected outcome**

The basic objective of the meeting is to provide a place for interaction among research leaders and partners to foster collaborative approach in planning and implementing project activities;

* Discuss activities carried out in 2015
* Challenges in project implementation
* Plan activities for the next year

**The expected outcomes of the meeting were:**

* Identify challenges affecting implementation of project activities and possible solutions
* Propose activities for the next year.

**Meeting process**

The meeting was chaired by the regional agricultural officer in-charge of extension services Mr. Stephen Yelsung. The meeting started at 09:30am with a prayer and self-introduction of participants.

**Welcome address by IITA representative**

Mr. Hamid Seidu (Research supervisor) welcome all participants to the meeting, adding that he was grateful to all participants for making it to the meeting notwithstanding the short notice .He also charged all participants to not hesitate to speak up as all have met to discuss the progress of the project in the region. He took the opportunity to apologize to the lead farmers whose communities were prepared for the visit of the evaluation team but was later cancelled; he explained it was due to the evaluator’s choice which was changed at the last minute. However the evaluation team was quite impressed with what they saw at the other communities he also apologized for the cancellation of the field days which was due to time constraints.

**IMPROVING CEREAL-LEGUME CROPPING SYSTEM TRIALS IN UPPER WEST REGION.**

Mr. Hamid Seidu updated participants on the cereal-legume cropping activities carried out from July to date.

Activities carried out include:

* Input distribution
* Establishment of mother, baby and up-scaling trials
* Agronomic management
* Data collection
* Data entry
* Research meeting and workshops

As per the appeal from the previous year distribution of input this year was done quite early so as to curb the situation where by farmers blame their inability to cultivate on late arrival of inputs. An additional 38 women were also given inputs to farm based on an appeal made by the women to the team involving Africa RISING socio-economist Dr. Kotu Bekele, Dr. Irmgarde and country representative Dr Asamoah Larbi for seeds and other inputs to farm since they were unable to access the inputs. The women were supported with inputs to sufficiently cultivate an acre of land each. This was done to empower the women and to help them improve their living conditions. Hamid also mentioned that Dr Saaka Buah of SARI who could not make it to the meeting was implementing trials on maize-legume rotation, he explained that the Dr Saaka was using different cowpea and maize varieties as well as different treatments for the trial. Maize was planted last year and this he has planted cowpea, this is being done to assess the performance of crops under cereal-legume rotational practices.

**Table 1 List of Participating Households;**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **District** | **Community** | **Female** | **Male** | **Total** |
| Wa west | Zanko | 73 | 25 | 98 |
|  | Guo | 22 | 18 | 40 |
|  | Siiriyiri | 15 | 15 | 30 |
|  | Nyagli | 25 | 6 | 31 |
|  | Passé | 45 | 25 | 70 |
| Nadowli | Goriyiri | 20 | 16 | 36 |
|  | Goli | 22 | 25 | 47 |
|  | Gyilli | 18 | 19 | 37 |
|  | nato-duori | 16 | 40 | 56 |
|  | Papu | 24 | 16 | 40 |

**Below is a list of trials established in 2015;**

1. Nitrogen fertilizer rates on maize yield
2. Spraying regime effect on grain yield of cowpea
3. Integrated soil fertility management in soybean yield
4. Maize –legume strip cropping systems in Northern Ghana
5. Maize-legume rotation cropping system in Northern Ghana
6. Phosphorus fertilizer rates on yield of groundnut
7. Planting time and spraying regime on sesame
8. Nitrogen rates and time of intercropping sesame in maize
9. Maize-Roselle intercrop as influenced by planting density
10. Maize-okra intercrop as influenced by planting density
11. Adaptation of pigeon pea short duration varietal trial
12. Adaptation of pigeon pea medium duration varietal trial

He added that data collected on all mother trial have been entered and it is currently been cleaned. But added that most of the baby trial data is yet to be submitted for entry especially that of the Nadowli district.

**Table 2: Mother trial established in Technology Parks;**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **District** | **Community** | **Trial** |
| Nadowli | Goriyiri | Sesame spraying regime |
|  |  | Maize-legume strip |
|  |  | Soyabean ISFM |
|  |  | Cowpea spraying regime |
|  |  | P rate on gnut |
|  |  | P rate on cowpea |
|  | Goli | Pigeon pea short duration |
|  |  | Pigeon pea medium duration |
|  |  | Maize-roselle |
|  |  | Maize-legume strip |
|  |  | Maize sesame |
|  |  | Cowpea spraying regime |
|  |  | Maize N rate |
|  | Gyilli | Cowpea spraying regime |
|  |  | P rate on cowpea |
|  | Nator-duori | Maize N rate |
|  |  | Maize sesame |
|  |  | P rate on cowpea |
|  |  | Sesame spraying regime |
|  | Papu | Maize-N-rate |
|  |  | Cowpea spraying regime |
|  |  | Maize-okra intercrop |
|  |  |  |
| Wa West | Zanko | Cowpea spraying regime |
|  |  | P-rate on groundnut |
|  |  | Maize ‘N’ rate |
|  |  | Soybean ISFM |
|  |  | Pigeon pea short duration |
|  |  | Pigeon pea medium duration |
|  | Guo | Maize ‘N’ rate |
|  |  | Cowpea spraying regime |
|  |  | Maize-legume |
|  |  | P rate on cowpea |
|  | Siriyiri | Maize-legume strip |
|  |  | Maize ‘N’ rate |
|  |  | Maize sesame intercrop |
|  |  | Sesame spraying |
|  | Nyagli | Maize-roselle intercrop |
|  |  |  |
|  |  | Maize-okra |
|  |  | P rate on cowpea |
|  | Pase | Maize ‘N’ rate |
|  |  | Groundnut ‘P’ rate |
|  |  | Cowpea spraying regime |
|  |  | Maize-legume rotation |
|  |  | Maize-strip cropping |
|  |  | P rate on cowpea |

**Challenges Encountered**

* Erratic rainfall pattern
* Poor quality of seeds

**Improving diverse diets and nutrition through agricultural interventions and behavioral change communication.**

Madam Adam Fauzia the nutrition officer for Wa West thanked Africa RISING for the tremendous work being done in the intervention communities. In her presentation she said 20 children were selected from each of the 5 communities to analyze their nutritional status with Siriyiri been a behavior change community to be compared with the other four (4) communities. She also said that in Siiriyiri there was a food demonstration to teach farmers how to prepare several meals with the crops they have been producing such as soybeans. In the past one could only prepare “weaniemix “ with soybean but there were several demonstration on how to prepare different meals with soybean for home consumption and for sale as well .She charged the farmers to not sell all their raw farm produce but rather consume what they grow and also process what they grow before selling.

**Women In Agricultural Development (WIAD) Wa West**

Miss Yvonne Yieri the WIAD officer for Wa West in her presentation said they partnered with the Ghana Health Service (GHS) to carryout nutrition activities in the intervention communities .She said that activities for the next year should be planned early to avoid the rush they had to go through this to carry out activities.

**Women In Agricultural Development (WIAD) Nadowli**

The WIAD officer for Nadowli Madam Florence Tantuo said that nutrition activities were carried out in all five intervention communities in the district. Though farmers produced soybean they lacked the knowledge to integrate soybeans into their local meals, thus farmers really appreciated the food demonstration exercise organized jointly with the nutrition officer in charge of Nadowli. She added that nurses were trained to undertake a trainer-of-trainees of other nurses and mal-nourished mothers who were not in the Africa RISING intervention communities for them to also benefit from the exercise.

**Challenges**

* Some mothers were not willing to participate
* Other communities not happy because they had no food demonstrations in their communities.

**Influence of Africa RISING activities on partner organizations**

The representative of ANTIKA Enterprise Mr. Mustapha Yunus the only input dealer partnering the Africa RISING project lauded Africa RISING for the excellent works being done in the intervention communities .He said their outfit was always ready to supply the project with whatever input was needed. He made an appeal for the Project to extend support to other communities within the district.

Mr Gaetin Kunyangna the representative of Community Aid for Rural Development CARD expressed his enthusiasm about the project and said he was specifically glad about the involvement of women in the project. He also said he was impressed the project is helping a separate women group in Zanko with agric inputs to better their livelihoods which he said was laudable and will go a long way to change the lives of the women in the project.

**BABY TRIALS AND UPSCALING-Wa West**

The District Director of Agriculture Wa West Mr. Dominic Maalu presented on baby trial activities in the district .He outlined the number of trials implemented in the district and the number of farmers on such trials .he said in total there had 240 beneficiary farmers under the Africa RISING project in the district and out of that number 82 were females and 158 were males. Performance generally was good even though some cowpea fields were destroyed by livestock and also said data has been collected and submitted to the IITA office in Wa.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Wa West | community | number of farmers |
| Scaling-up strip cropping |  | 50 |
| Scaling-up rotation |  | 50 |
| Medium duration maize baby trial | Passe | 10 |
|  | Nyagli | 10 |
| Early maturing maize baby trial | Siriyiri | 10 |
|  | Guo | 10 |
|  | Zanko | 10 |
| Cowpea spraying regime baby trial | Pase | 10 |
|  | Nyagli | 10 |
|  | Guo | 10 |
|  | Zanko | 10 |
| ISFM soybean baby trial | Zanko | 20 |
|  | Pase | 20 |

**CHALLENGES**

* Erratic rainfall pattern
* Difficulty in accessing tractor services
* Late arrival of TSP fertilizer
* Mobility problems for AEAs
* Poor germination growth of seeds

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

* Making available drought resistant varieties
* Early booking of tractor services by farmers
* Early purchasing of fertilizer (TSP)
* More motor bikes will help solve the mobility problems of AEAs.

**BABY TRIALS AND UPSCALING-Nadowli**

Mr. Stephen Yelsung gave a brief presentation on behalf of the Nadowli District Director of Agriculture who was not able to attend the meeting because he was in Tamale for a workshop. He said there was a total of 214 beneficiary farmers under the Africa-RISING project in the district out of which 107 were doing up-scaling and the rest either doing early maturing maize baby, cowpea spraying regime or soybean baby trials .He ended by saying that inputs were distributed early this as compared to last year.

**CHALLENGES**

* some of the farmers planted without supervision
* Poor germination of seeds
* Erratic rainfall pattern
* The office is under staffed as one AEA had to handle 3 communities
* Some farmers also did not cultivate

**RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM (R4D)**

**Wa West**

Mr. Roger Anyueta the R4D organizer said after the inauguration of the platform in September 2014 they have set up an 11 member committee to steer the affairs of the platform .A constitution was drafted and adopted by members of the platform and an account has been opened with the Nandom rural bank with an initial deposit of 50GHS to keep the account. Budget was submitted to IITA for onward approval to enable the committee setup R4D in the various communities. But the budget is yet to be approved.

**CHALLENGES:**

* Wa West R4D is yet to get support from Africa RISING

**Nadowli**

Mr. John Miniyah, the R4D vice chairman for the Nadowli district presented on behalf of the district platform .In his presentation he said since the inauguration of the District R4D the executives have been able to also draft a constitution and opened an account with the Sonzele Rural bank in Nadowli. They have been able to setup the R4D platforms for all the 5 communities in the district, however only one community ( Goli ) has been able to draft a constitution and opened an account with the same Sonzele Rural bank. Monthly meetings are held with the community R4D members. He added also that it will be very good if a community review analysis will be organized to know farmers view on activities carried out this year .

**CHALLENGES:**

* Late response to budgets affecting the progress of work
* Limited resources

**Activity Plan for 2016**

* **Data entry and cleaning**
* **Data analysis**
* **Workshops**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 08:00 am – 09:00 am | Arrival and registration | Fusieni Abdulai |
| 09:00 am – 09:10 am | Open prayer and introduction of participants | All |
| 09:10 am – 09:20 am | Welcome address/ meeting objectives | Hamid |
| 09:20 am – 10:00 am | Review of previous agenda and actions taken | Hamid |
| 10:00 am – 10: 30 | Group photo and coffee break | All |
| 10:30 am – 11:30 am | Brief presentation on Africa RISING activities undertaken in 2015 | All Theme representatives |
| 11:30 am – 12:00 am | Brief and discussion on influence of AR activities on partner organizations | Representatives of key partners |
| 12:10 am – 12:40 am | Brief on established 2015 up scaling and baby trials and discussion MoFA activities | Dominic Maaluu and David K. Waawula |
| 12:40pm – 1:00pm | Brief on R4D activities and discussion | Isaac Yendau and John Mwininye |
| 12: 30pm- 1:30 pm | Activity plan for 2016 season | R4D and Theme representatives |
| 1:30pm-1:45pm | Other matters | All participants |
| 1:45 pm | Closing remarks | Hamid |

**Programme for 3rd research team meeting**

Date: Friday 18th December, 2015

Venue: MoFA Conference Hall, Wa

Annex 1 List of Participants at 3rd Research Team Meeting of the Upper West Region

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| S/N | Name | Title | Institution |
|  | Gaetin Kunyangna | Key partner | CARD |
|  | John Baanaa | Contact person | Nator-Duori |
|  | Ali Ezekiel Dramani | Contact person | Zanko |
|  | Florence N.Tantuo | WIAD | MoFA-Nadowli |
|  | John Miniyah | R4D | Nadowli |
|  | Maalu Dominic | District Director | Wa West |
|  | Anyueta Roger | R4D | Wa West |
|  | Ziekye Solomon | Extension officer | Nadowli |
|  | Mustapha Yunus | Key Partner | Antika Enterprise |
|  | Thomas Toore | Contact person | Gyilli |
|  | Elvis Kundibagu | Contact person | Nyagli |
|  | Oscar Dong | Contact person | Guo |
|  | Alfred Tambo | Contact person | Papu |
|  | Stephen K. Yelsung | Regional Extension officer | MoFA |
|  | Dunkwa Asimu | Contact person | Goli |
|  | Yieri Yvonne | WIAD | Wa West |
|  | Ambamaana Soyiri | Contact person | Pase |
|  | Tawie Tumawaye | Contact person | Goriyiri |
|  | Adam Fauzia | Nutrition officer | Wa West |
|  | Seidu Hamid | Research Supervisor | IITA |
|  | Fuseini Abdulai | Research Supervisor | IITA |
|  | Ismail Mahama | Research Technician | IITA |
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